

2028 Bissett Guide

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The Return of Bissett

Bissett is back! We are preparing to welcome adventurous Scouting crews to Bissett for the 2028 season after a multi-year break. Whether it's the travel to the end of the road, the thrill of a floatplane ride, or time on the water, you and your Scouts can look forward to memorable wilderness adventures in the Far Northland.

Bissett has always offered an incredibly unique experience for Scouts. Landing in a float plane far from roads and embarking on a canoe trek in a wilderness that is seldom disturbed is simply a remarkable Scouting experience. The landscape, however, has changed. In the past decade, large fires have redefined the wilderness our scouts travel in. With the temporary closure of Bissett, the trails we cared for have started to return to the forest. While Bissett has always been known as Scouting's "Most Extreme High Adventure", today that saying is even more true. When Scouts return to Bissett in 2028, they can expect to see vast wilderness burned, trails overgrown that will need reopening, and a forest that awaits their exploration.

What to expect on a 2028 Bissett Trek

Traveling through recently burned areas brings inherent risk and adversity, while providing a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience true wilderness. As such, all crews must be aware they are signing up for a High Adventure experience unlike any other. Exposure to the elements, reduced brush cover, difficult campsite conditions, and changing landmarks are factors that must be considered. Fire is a natural feature of these landscapes. The most recent fires in 2018 and 2025 have significantly changed the landscape of the areas we travel. Crews will travel through unburned and recently burned areas, a rare window into this unique ecosystem.

But don't let these factors deter you in this adventure; these recently burned areas also provide some of the best scenic views, wild berry picking, wildlife viewing, and a front row seat to the northern forest regeneration. Recent burns also encourage an increase in Moose activity in the area and can even reduce the number of insects due to wind and sun exposure. This is a dynamic wilderness experience that will create adventures that last a lifetime.

How to use this Guide

This guide goes over special considerations for going on a Northern Tier trek to our Bissett base. It is not a replacement for the Northern Tier Advisors guide found here https://www.ntier.org/canoetreks/advisors-guide-and-participant-handbook/

Crew's planning to go on a trek to Bissett will need to read both documents.

If necessary, additional information will be provided to all registered Bissett crews. Due to the dynamic nature of post-burn landscapes, crews should be prepared for changing conditions that may affect paddling areas

This guide is intended to serve as a starting point for planning your Bissett adventure. As conditions and route recommendations evolve, Northern Tier will provide updated information to help crews prepare a safe and memorable experience.

Parks Travelled on a Bissett trek

All Bissett crews will paddle through Atikaki Provincial Park. However, crews have the option of going through Woodland Caribou Provincial Park (in Ontario) as part of their trip. Entering Woodland Caribou requires a permit and a small additional fee which can be purchased upon route selection once your crew arrives in Bissett.

Atikaki Provincial Park of Manitoba is the true home of the Northern Expeditions program. The Atikaki (meaning "country of the caribou" in Saulteaux-Ojibwe) is only accessible by charter aircraft or canoe. Very few people travel through the Atikaki region. Several of the river systems that traverse the park are quite famous (particularly the Bloodvein and Pigeon Rivers) and are travelled by only a handful of serious expedition canoeists each summer. In addition, Northern Tier crews in the Atikaki Provincial Park are limited to a size of 11 people. No permits are required for travel in the Atikaki.

Woodland Caribous Provincial Park
Woodland Caribou Provincial Park lies directly adjacent to the Atikaki, separated only by the Manitoba/Ontario border (Atikaki in Manitoba, Woodland Caribou in Ontario). Crews can choose to paddle into Woodland Caribou in order to see several famous Ojibwe pictographs on Artery Lake.

Groups of nine or smaller may camp in Woodland Caribou. However, permits are required for traveling in Woodland Caribou. Permits can be acquired by phone during business hours – most crews wait to get them when they reach Bissett. If you plan on traveling through Woodland Caribou, it is helpful to let the base know in advance and to arrive at the base on time (between 1 and 2 PM).

The prices for permits are the following (subject to change):

- Camping Fees in CAD (overnight): $15.00/adult, 6.50/youth

Bissett Route Planning

Your crew will plan your route with Bissett staff once you arrive. At our map pavilion, crews and staff draw from decades of local knowledge from map makers, bush pilots, fishing guides, and experienced interpreters. Together, you'll shape a trip around your crew's abilities, interests, and current conditions.

Reserving your float plane

Bissett trips require a float plane shuttle to and from the wilderness canoe cache. The cost and scheduling of the float plane(s) is the responsibility of the crew. The crew must also cover the cost of the flight for the interpreter.

Flights typically run around $550 USD per person as of 2027 but can fluctuate due to both currency exchange and aviation fuel prices

Please Note: Northern Tier does not control the scheduling or promptness of your flights! Weather and other safety concerns may require the float plane schedule to change, causing your fly-in or fly-out to be delayed. This does not happen often, but it is a possibility you should be aware of.

Northern Tier will contact crews who are registered for Bissett ahead of time with instructions on how to book their flights.

Arriving at Bissett

Crews should plan to arrive at the Bissett Base between **1:00 and 2:00 p.m.** on the first day of their expedition. Please plan to eat lunch in Pine Falls before arriving at the base. On the final day of the trip, crews can expect to depart following breakfast.

Crews are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from Northern Tier. Several travel options are available to reach Bissett. The community of Bissett is located 150 miles (240km) northeast of Winnipeg, Manitoba, a drive of about 3.5 hours.

Winnipeg is served by commercial air, rail and bus transportation and is the most common gateway for crews traveling to Bissett. From Winnipeg, crews typically rent vehicles or arrange shuttle transportation for the final leg of their journey.

If your crew is traveling by air, consider spending a night in Winnipeg before arriving at Northern Tier. While it is possible to fly into Winnipeg and continue directly to Bissett on the same day, crews should remember that arrival day includes approximately six hours of trip preparation and orientation. An overnight stay in Winnipeg can help to ensure everyone arrives rested and ready to begin their adventure. Additionally, Winnipeg offers a variety of attractions, dining options, and cultural experiences that crews may wish to enjoy before or after their expedition.

Traveling to Bissett

Several dining options are available in Powerview-Pine Falls. Charlie Biggs, located just across the Winnipeg River on Highway 304, offers dine-in lunch service. Downtown Pine Falls, on Highway 11, features a Subway restaurant and Midway Foods grocery store. Crews looking for a quick meal may also stop at Clark's Corner, located at the intersection of Highways 11 and 304, which offers take-out fried chicken. Clark's Corner requests that groups call ahead at 204-367-2238 to help ensure timely service.

For crews bringing their own lunch, several scenic locations provide excellent opportunities to take a break and stretch before arriving in Bissett. A park is located on the south bank of the Winnipeg River just north of the intersection of Highways 11 and 304. Additional picnic and rest-stop opportunities can be found at campgrounds along the Manigotagan River (70km/43mi East of Pine Falls on Highway 304) and English Brook (9km/5.6mi east of Manigotagan).

Pine Falls is the last location where fuel is reliably available before reaching Bissett. Crews should ensure their vehicles are fueled prior to departing Pine Falls; ***there are no public fuel services in Bissett.***

Crews needing Canadian currency should plan to stop in Pine Falls. The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) branch offers a 24-hour ATM that accepts some U.S. debit cards. The ATM networks accepted are posted at the machine.

If travel delays occur due to weather, road conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances, please contact the Bissett Base as soon as possible so staff can adjust arrival plans accordingly. If you experience any issues or have questions while traveling, Northern Tier staff can be reached at (218) 365-4811.

Where can I stay en route to Bissett?
Crews arriving in Winnipeg, Manitoba prior to their scheduled arrival date should not plan on staying at the Bissett base. Winnipeg has many hotels at a variety of prices to choose from.

Fishing Licenses

Manitoba Fishing Licenses – All individuals 16 years of age or older must possess a valid Manitoba fishing license to fish in Manitoba Waters. Participants planning to fish during their expedition are encouraged to purchase their licenses online prior to arriving in Canada. Fishing licenses are not available for purchase at Northern Tier's Bissett Base. For additional information or to purchase a license, visit the Manitoba Conservation website: https://www.gov.mb.ca/elicensing/index.html

Trading Post (Retail Store)

Bissett has a small trading post where crews will be able to purchase a limited amount of Bisset memorabilia on location. It is important that your crew brings all the equipment you will need for your trek to the Bissett base and doesn't rely on last minute items from the trading post due to our limited inventory. If you have questions feel free to give us a call at (218)-365-4811

Maps

Northern Tier requires that a set of Maps be carried in each canoe, and those can be purchased in the Bissett Trading Post after trip selection. In Bissett, maps cost approximately $20.00 and an estimated 2-4 maps are needed for each canoe. Map cases are also recommended for each set of maps and cost approximately $20.00 each. Prices may vary. Northern Tier Trading posts in Canada only accept Canadian Currency.

Medical Service In Bissett, MB

The nearest hospital, Pine Falls Health Complex, is located in Pine Falls, Manitoba – it is used very rarely. They do not accept American Insurance but do provide paperwork for you to make a claim upon your return home. They expect payment in cash or credit card.

Transportation to Bissett:

What are the roads like when driving to Bissett?
Some crews (especially those in the Great Plains states) drive themselves to Bissett. Keep in mind that the roads for the last two hours of the drive are unpaved and can be very rough.

Highway 304 is a remote gravel road, please be careful. While driving to Bissett, crews may encounter gravel trucks and road graders that can kick up impressive clouds of dust. There are also many moose and deer in the area, which present additional hazards

Crews arriving by public transportation will need to arrange charter transportation to Bissett. A few of the more popular options are listed below:

Vital Transit	Budget Rent A Car	Five Star Bus Lines

Winnipeg, MB 204.633.2022 spaull@vitaltransitservice.com	Winnipeg International Airport Winnipeg, MB 204.989.8510	Winnipeg, MB 204.261.7698 starfive@mts.net Fivestarbuslines.com

CROSSING THE CANDIAN BORDER

Travel into Canada with a group of youth requires careful planning. The documentation required to travel outside the US (passports and passport cards) may take several months to acquire.

Please read the following information carefully. If you have any additional questions, please consult the US State Departments webpage on travel to Canada (https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/canada.html) as well as the Canada Border Services Agency's website (http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html).

Please follow these steps to ensure safe and conflict-free border crossings:

- **All participants who are US citizens must bring an original proof of citizenship (Passport or Passport Card) to cross the border.** Passport cards **cannot** be used for some methods of crossing the border (i.e., by plane). Naturalized citizens should bring their naturalization certificate. Getting a passport can take several months – if you need a passport, start this process well in advance of your trip.
    - Non-US Citizen participants should contact a US Immigrations Office and a Canadian Customs office to make sure their documentation is in order. Permanent non-US Citizens are advised to bring their Alien Registration Receipt Card. Non-US Citizens must have a multiple entry Visa to return to the United States.

- **All youth age 17 and under must have a** Parental Release Form **allowing them to travel internationally.** This form can be found in the appendix of the Northern Tier Advisors guide https://www.ntier.org/canoetreks/advisors-guide-and-participant-handbook/
    - The Parental Release Form must be *signed by both parents and have both parents' contact information*. Children with special circumstances (death of a parent, legal guardian, etc.) should bring proof of their custody arrangement.
    - The Canadian government is very concerned about the trafficking of children across the border. They require these documents to ensure that all children are crossing the border with the consent of

all legal guardians. While currently, the Parental Release Form does not require notarization, rules may change in the future.

- **Anyone with a criminal record should review this Canadian Immigration website** http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/5312ETOC.asp#overview to ensure that they will be allowed to cross the border. In some cases, individuals may apply for a waiver to have their border crossing approved. Certain violations (ex. DUIs and Reckless Driving) can be significant obstacles in crossing the border.

Final Words

When we paused our Bissett operations in 2023, we made a commitment to only resume operations when we could deliver the safe, high-quality programs Scouts deserve. While we have been gone from Bissett, the landscape has changed dramatically, however the adventure still waits for crews willing to take the journey. We are more than excited to bring back these unique float plane treks into the Atikaki wilderness to our lineup of awe-inspiring canoe expeditions, and we hope that you will join us in 2028 as we relaunch Bissett!